DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 431 956 CE 078 988

TITLE	HRD Professional Development.
PUB DATE	1999-03-00
NOTE	24p.; In: Academy of Human Resource Development (AHRD) Conference Proceedings; see CE 078 963. Paper by Ovaice and Wentling (24-2) is not included.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Education; Adult Students; Bachelors Degrees; Colleges; Comparative Analysis; Demography; Distance Education; Higher Education; *Labor Force Development; Mentors; Needs Assessment; Partnerships in Education; *Professional Development; *School Business Relationship; Student Characteristics; Student Participation; Teacher Improvement

ABSTRACT

These three papers are from a symposium on human resource development (HRD) professional development. "Mentoring as a Tool for Faculty Development: Predicting Positive Outcomes for Mentors" (Ellen J. Mullen, John Van Ast, Harry Grant) describes a study of the relationship between mentoring outcomes and mentoring activities and mentor and mentee characteristics. It reports that female mentors and those who served more psychosocial and vocational functions reported greater benefits and that among mentees, only hours spent with one's mentor was a significant predictor of mentoring benefits. "A Corporate-University Partnership for the Development of HRD Professionals: A Case Study" (Marijke Kehrhahn, Rudolfo Verrilli) reports the implementation and outcomes-to-date of a strategic partnership for development of HRD professionals and scholars that was designed using Jacobs' guidelines for HRD collaborations and analyzed using current partnership-building theory. "Employed Adults in a B.S. Ed. HRD Program Option: Who Are These Students and Why Are They Here?" (Hui-Chin Chu, Ana Martinez, Barbara E. Hinton) discusses a descriptive study to determine whether demographics of students in a distance learning HRD bachelor degree-completion program are consistent with those of the "new adult learner" as identified in the literature and whether factors influencing student participation in this program are consistent with findings in a previously conducted needs assessment of potential students. (YLB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 431 956

24 **HRD Professional Development**

Chair: Maria Cseh, Oakland University

24-1 Mentoring as a Tool for Faculty Development: Predicting Positive Outcomes for Mentors

Ellen J. Mullen, Iowa State University

John Van Ast, , Iowa State University

Harry Grant, , University of California at Irving

24-2 The Evolving Role of Trainers and the Consulting Component in Corporate Universities

Ghazala Ovaice, University of Illinois at Urbana/Champaign

Tim L. Wentling, University of Illinois at Urbana/Champaign

24-3 A Corporate-University Partnership for the Development of HRD Professionals: A Case Study

Marijke T. Kehrhahn, University of Connecticut

Rudolfo Vernilli, The Hartford Life Company

24-4 Employed Adults in the B.S. ED Hrd Program Option: Who Are These Students and Why Are They Here?

Hui-Chin Chu, University of Arkansas

Ana Martinez, University of Arkansas

Barbara E. Hinton, University of Arkansas

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

E Mullen B Hinton
M Kehrhahn

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2A

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CE 078 926

Mentoring as a Tool for Faculty Development: Predicting Positive Outcomes for Mentors

Ellen J. Mullen
John Van Ast
Iowa State University

Harry Grant
University of California at Irvine

Mentoring programs have emerged in various organizations, from industrial to educational, for employee socialization and development purposes. Not all programs have experienced return on the investment. This study looked at the relationship between mentoring outcomes and mentoring activities as well as mentor and mentee characteristics. Female mentors reported greater benefits, as did those who served more psychosocial and vocational functions. Among mentees, only hours spent with one's mentor was a significant predictor of mentoring benefits.

Keywords: Mentoring, Faculty Improvement, Mentoring Programs

Mentoring promotes the professional and personal growth of the mentee through coaching, support, feedback and the sharing of information and is considered an invaluable development tool for those new to an organization or in early career stages (e.g., Bova, 1995; Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1991; Dreher & Ash, 1990). Studies have shown generally positive consequences of mentoring programs for mentees, with relatively little focus on outcomes for mentors. This study looks at the mentor perspective on formal mentoring among faculty in higher education. A greater understanding of mentoring and mentoring outcomes would help to maximize the effectiveness of mentoring models, benefiting the faculty involved and the institutions employing the programs.

Mentoring in Business and Industry: Outcomes

In business, benefits of mentoring are most often monetary and positional. Mentees most often report greater salary as an outcome, as well as promotions, career advancements, and more internal mobility (e.g., Aryee, Wyatt, & Stone, 1996; Baugh, Lankau, & Scandura, 1996; Chao, 1997; Corzine, Buntzman, & Busch, 1994; Scandura & Schriesheim, 1994; Turban & Dougherty, 1994; Vincent & Seymour, 1995). Others cite the development of relationships, new information, receiving job-related help, and imparting knowledge to others (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997).

Intrinsic benefits most often associated with being a mentor are job satisfaction and perceived career success for individuals, as well as more satisfaction in helping others, and new perspectives of a mentor's own situation (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997; Ayree et al., 1996; Chao, 1997; Corzine et al., 1994; Mobley, Jaret, & Marsh, 1994; Ragins & Scandura, 1994; Scandura, 1997; Thibodeaux & Lowe, 1996; Turban & Dougherty, 1994). Companies using mentoring programs can also reap rewards, such as increased employee satisfaction and development (Berube, 1996; Hale, 1996; Scandura, 1997).

Some research suggests that mentoring can help women succeed in male-dominated organizations (Matsumoto, 1997), but overall gender effects in mentoring are unclear (Johnson & Scandura, 1994; Mobley, et al., 1994; Ragins & Scandura, 1994; Turban & Dougherty, 1994). The closeness of the relationship appears to be an important factor related to outcomes (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997; Burke & McKeen, 1997; Heimann & Pittenger, 1996).

Effective communication skills, sincerity, motivation and past experience of a mentor have been shown to influence the effectiveness of mentoring (Aryee, Chay, & Chew, 1996; Mullen, 1994). Mentees show significantly higher needs for power and achievement than nonmentees, an internal locus of control, high self-monitoring, and high emotional stability (Fagenson, 1994; Turban & Dougherty, 1994).

Mentoring in Education: Outcomes

Copyright © 1999 Ellen J. Mullen, John Van Ast, and Harry Grant

Mentoring programs in academia have been widely viewed as beneficial (e.g., Bush & Coleman, 1995; Ganser, 1994; Rehrig, 1996; Southworth, 1995). Mentored instructors tend to have a better understanding of student needs, and their students show greater learning (Dembele, 1996; Freiberg, 1994; Van Ast, 1995). Mentoring enables professors to improve instructional materials, keep up-to-date on new technology and teaching, and to network with other faculty (Foote, 1996).

Mentored instructors report intrinsic benefits, such as mutual respect, trust, and emotional support from their mentors, and personal development (Abell, 1995; Ballantyne, 1995; Jordan, 1995; St. Clair, 1994). Campbell (1995) reported that mentees felt less of a need to seek help than nonmentees. According to Graham (1994), mentors were reminded of the value of their past experience and had an opportunity to examine themselves; mentees obtained insight into learning and working styles and were more confident. Although faculty mentoring programs in educational settings produce many benefits, they appear to more psychosocial than vocational (Majette-Daniels, 1993; Shumate, 1995).

Research on gender and mentoring in educational institutions has produced mixed results. Freitag (1995) concluded that males and females were equally likely to pursue mentoring relationships. Another study of female professors/mentees revealed less psychosocial support received as rank of the mentor increased, regardless of the mentor's gender, but more vocational activities (Struthers, 1995). Issues were indicated when both gender and race were analyzed together. Females from minority groups experienced compounded stereotypes and conflicts between culture and academic values (Bova, 1995; Shumate, 1995). Mentees with white, male mentors received higher annual compensation; white, male mentees were more likely to establish a relationship with white, male mentors (Dreher & Cox, 1996). Characteristics of the relationship may also influence outcomes. Some studies have suggested that informal relationships may be more beneficial than formal situations (Bainer & Didham, 1995; Tepper, 1995), and that more than one mentor per mentee may be important (Henderson & Welch, 1993; Orpen, 1995). According to Westhoff (1995), teachers who have been mentored feel more support and general awareness and information regarding procedures, whether the relationship is formal or informal.

Whereas, in business, individuals reported the extrinsic benefits of money or advancement, as well as intrinsic outcomes, the benefits described by those in education were almost entirely intrinsic. Some studies in education showed that mentees were gaining good psychosocial support, but less career-enhancement activities (e.g., Majette-Daniels, 1993; Shumate, 1995). The following objective was addressed in this study to increase understanding of faculty mentoring programs and how to maximize outcomes for mentors and their institutions:

Research Objective

To examine mentoring outcomes for mentors and their relationship with selected individual differences among mentors and mentoring relationship characteristics.

Method

Data Collection

The data used were obtained from participants in the faculty mentoring program at a large Midwestern university from 1993 to the present. Surveys were sent to 331 faculty members/mentoring participants at the university (165 mentors and 166 mentees). The overall response rate was 33% (n = 189). Mentors responded at a rate of 40% (n = 55); mentees responded at a rate of 37% (n = 52). Participants were told that a survey was being sent to their respective mentee or mentor and that all responses would be completely confidential. They were asked to complete the survey independently. The mentor and mentee surveys were parallel in form and content. A self-addressed, stamped envelope was provided for the return of the completed survey.

Measures

Predictors:Mentors were asked whether they had previous experience in a mentoring relationship. All respondents were asked about the length of the relationship and the number of hours per month spent with their partners. Participants were also asked to indicate their age, gender, partner's gender, and the number of years at the institution. Noe's (1988) 29-item scale was used to examine the extent to which the mentor was providing

psychosocial and vocational mentoring functions. Nine items were developed for this study to measure the use of mentoring activities to promote intended outcomes (e.g., "To what extent did you have regular meetings with your mentee?"). Both scales used a five-point, Likert response scale, ranging from "To a very small extent" to "To a very large extent." For the two multiple-item scales, single indices were obtained by averaging across the 29 items and 9 items respectively.

Dependent variable: Mullen's (1994) 21-item scale was used to measure benefits of being a mentor (e.g., "Indicate the extent to which you developed new ideas and innovative thinking as a result of this mentoring relationship"), with a five-point Likert response scale ranging from "To a very small extent" to "To a very large extent." A single index of mentor benefits was obtained by averaging across the items.

Data Analysis Strategy

Analyses included the computation of Cronbach's alphas as indices of scale internal consistency reliability; correlation coefficients indicating the degree of overlap between variables included in the study; and hierarchical regression equations to examine the relationships between mentor benefits and individual and relationship characteristics, including mentoring activities.

Results

Means, standard deviations, and correlation coefficients are shown in Table 1. Table 2 depict hierarchical regression analyses. Demographic characteristics of participants were as follows: 34% of mentors were female (n = 30); 49% of mentees were female (n = 49); mean age of mentors was 49.68 (n = 89); and mean age of mentees was 40.08 (n = 100). Mentors reported spending an average 8.38 hours per month with their mentees, while mentees reported 4.48 hours/month. 31% of mentors had been mentors in the past (n = 28).

The average mentor held a Ph.D. (or equivalent) and had been at their institution for 16.82 years. The average mentee held a Ph.D. (or equivalent) and had been at their institution for 5 years. The average mentor was a tenured full professor. The average mentee was an assistant professor. 29.57% of mentoring dyads (i.e., mentor and mentee) were cross-sex (n = 16). The male mentor/male mentee relationship was the most frequent type, and the female mentor/male mentee was the most infrequent type. The average mentoring relationship lasted 15.32 months.

Mentors

Mentors reported a mean level of 2.27 on the mentor benefits scale, indicating benefits in the range of "small extent" to "some extent." As shown by the correlation coefficients (see Table 1), mentor benefits were significantly related to: (1) the extent to which mentors engaged in mentoring activities to promote mentee outcomes ($r = .58$, $p < .01$); (2) the extent to which mentors seek feedback on their research from their mentees ($r = .45$, $p < .01$); (3) the extent to which mentors seek feedback on their teaching from their mentees ($r = .33$, $p < .05$); (4) mentor information seeking from their mentees ($r = .33$, $p < .05$); (5) mentor gender ($r = .48$, $p < .01$); and (6) serving psychosocial and vocational functions ($r = .68$, $p < .01$). Mentor benefits were not significantly correlated with mentor age; the gender mix of the relationship; the number of hours spent together; job satisfaction; or experience as a mentor in the past.

The results of the hierarchical regression analysis (see Table 2) indicate that only gender (beta = .30, $p < .05$, in step two) and mentoring functions (beta = .40, $p < .05$) significantly predicted mentor benefits. Age, gender composition, time spent together, having been a mentor before, and mentoring activities did not bear significant beta weights. Female mentors who served greater mentoring functions tended to report greater benefits of being a mentor.

Mentees

Overall, mentees indicated a mean response of 3.02, or a moderate level, on the mentoring functions scale, representing the extent to which mentees receive psychosocial and vocational functions from their mentors. Illustrated by the correlation coefficients (see Table 1), psychosocial and vocational functions were significantly related to mentoring ($r = .87$, $p < .01$); mentor benefits ($r = .64$, $p < .01$); gender composition of the relationship ($r = .28$, $p < .05$); and hours spent together ($r = .48$, $p < .01$). These correlations indicate that mentees experience more psychosocial and vocational outcomes when more structured mentoring activities are utilized. This suggests that

more structure to the relationship and preparation of mentors would positively impact outcomes for mentees. Further, mentees who reported receiving greater mentoring functions also reported spending more time with their mentors, perhaps indicating that mentors should be encouraged to spend ample time with their mentees.

The hierarchical multiple regression analysis resulted in a significant beta weight only for time spent together (beta = .32, $p < .05$, in step one). Mentee's age and gender, relationship gender composition, mentoring functions, and mentoring activities did not bear significant beta weights with the mentee data.

Discussion

It appears from these results that mentors who put more into the relationship tend to get more out of it. Mentoring functions significantly predicted mentoring benefits with the mentor data in both hierarchical equations. Disappointingly, mentoring activities did not bear a significant beta weight in either regression equation or for either mentors or mentees. This may be due to overlap with mentoring functions (i.e., multicollinearity), the items themselves, or some other methodological issue, because the correlation coefficient reflecting the relationship between mentoring activities and mentoring benefits was relatively large and significant with both mentor and mentee data. The fact that we have begun to quantitatively examine mentoring activities and their influence is a step that deserves to be taken further.

These findings also suggest that, for mentors, mentor benefits are not significantly associated with the mentor's age or having been a mentor before. For mentors, there was not a link between mentoring benefits and the amount of time spent with one's mentee, although among mentees hours spent together did predict mentoring benefits. And while mentor gender *was* related to mentoring benefits (mentor data), gender composition of the relationship did not have an influence. In this case, female mentors reported greater mentoring benefits, but the gender mix of the relationship did not seem to matter. The only other predictor that was significantly related to mentor benefits was mentoring functions, indicating that mentors who served more psychosocial and vocational mentoring functions reported greater benefits. Practical mentoring activities did not relate significantly to mentoring benefits among mentors or mentees in the regression equations, although they produced significant correlations. This suggests continuing to look at the influence of mentoring activities or strategies for promoting positive outcomes more systematically.

With the mentee data, only hours spent together was significantly predictive of mentor benefits. The mentees who spent more time with their mentors perceived greater benefits for their mentors.

As Kram (1985) has suggested, the mentoring relationships characterized by greater mentoring functions are the most beneficial for mentees and, may be beneficial for mentors as well. Perhaps for the mentors, "the more you put into something, the more you get out of it." Among these mentors, those who served vocational and psychosocial functions report greater benefits of being mentors. Future research should examine the influence of vocational and psychosocial (mentoring) functions separately as well as look at specific benefits of mentoring. Our study aggregated vocational and psychosocial functions into mentoring functions along with combining the various benefits of mentoring.

Encouragingly, mentors benefited whether they had experience as mentors or not and irrespective of the gender mix of the relationship. Age of the participants also appeared not to be a factor of concern in maximizing mentoring benefits. Activities used to serve mentoring functions, e.g., regularly scheduled meetings, were not related to mentoring benefits in this study as expected, at least not according to the regression analyses. The correlation coefficients suggest otherwise. This was a disappointing finding (i.e., the regression results) since, again, it was expected that what one "put into" the relationship was expected to be related to what one "got out of" the relationship. Methodological issues are likely a factor.

There were differences in the reportings of mentors and mentees on the same issues. The most interesting discrepancy found between mentor and mentee responses was the reported hours spent together. Mentors and mentees disagreed in terms of how much time they spent together (mentor mean = 6.13 hours per month; mentee mean = 4.00 hours per month). The need for greater explanation to participants regarding what constituted time spent together as mentor and mentee may be indicated. Time spent together significantly predicted mentoring benefits only among mentees, not among mentors. Benefiting from mentoring among mentors was not a function of how much time they spent with their mentees. For mentees, the two were linked. Further work should focus on this discrepancy and what it reflects.

This study is not without limitations, like most empirical studies. First, survey data were used, which may be subject to method bias. The limitations of such data should be noted. However, this was the only feasible means of data collection and two sources (mentors and mentees) were used in effort to avoid using a unilateral perspective.

Certainly, these are perceptions, but perceptual data was sought. Self-report with some mentee report was the most feasible approach for gathering perceptions from this sample.

Second, because of the largely preliminary nature of this study, several variables used were summary variables. The mentoring activities variable summarized nine items ranging from "To what extent did you have regular meetings with your mentee?" to "To what extent did you do research jointly with your mentee?" These items may be more meaningful in isolation. They should be examined separately in future work. Also, psychosocial and vocational mentoring functions were merged into mentoring functions. Although mentoring functions were a significant predictor of mentoring benefits in this study, it might be more useful in the future to separate the two. Third, only one educational institution was represented in this study, making the representativeness of the data of other institutions and the generalizability of the results to other settings questionable. Still, it offers some preliminary results and opens the door on these issues, hopefully leading to further work.

In conclusion, these data show that the mentors and mentees in this sample did perceive that they experience benefits of mentoring. Institutions with faculty mentoring programs may take heart at this. Readers are advised to be cautious in generalizing these findings beyond the institution examined. Future research needs to attempt to replicate and expand upon these findings in other academic and nonacademic settings. These results also hint that we may not need to be concerned with the gender mix of mentoring relationships when matching mentors to mentees. The fact that hours spent together related to benefits for mentees, but not mentors, also merits further attention to look at the reason(s) behind this finding.

Because some mentoring programs in organizations target assisting female employees, it is encouraging to see that the female mentors in this study benefited more, rather than less, than the male mentors. It would be interesting as well as useful to investigate why women did tend to benefit more in this sample. Finally, finding a significant relationship between serving mentoring functions and benefiting from mentoring is consistent with what many of us would suspect: That mentors who put more into the relationship also get more out of it. Certainly, this finding is worthy of continued examination.

The better we understand these relationships, the more likely we are to be able to maximize the positive outcomes. A greater understanding of mentoring should lead to greater value added from mentoring programs and, thus, greater justification for the investment organizations make in these programs. Overall, the results suggest there are positive outcomes for both the mentor and the mentee involved in this university mentoring program, particularly if the mentor serves the necessary functions.

References

Abell, S. K. (1995). Somebody to count on: Mentor/intern relationships in a beginning teacher internship program. Teaching and Teacher Education, 11(2), 173-188.

Allen, T. D., Poteet, M. L., & Burroughs, S. M. (1997). The mentor's perspective: A qualitative inquiry and future research agenda. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 51, 70-89.

Aryee, S., Chay, Y. W., & Chew, J. (1996). The motivation to mentor among managerial employees: An interactionist approach. Group and Organization Management, 21, 261-277.

Aryee, S., Wyatt, T., & Stone, R. (1996). Early Career outcomes of graduate employees: The effect of mentoring and ingratiation. Journal of Management Studies, 33, 95-118.

Ballantyne, R. (1995). Mentoring beginning teachers: A qualitative analysis of process and outcomes. Educational Review, 47(3), 297-307.

Baugh, S. G., Lankau, M. J., & Scandura, T. A. (1996). An investigation of the effects of protégé gender on responses to mentoring. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 49, 309-323.

Berube, E. M. (1996). Mentoring is one approach to agent retention issue. Best's Review, 96, 82-85.

Bova, B. M. (1995). Mentoring revisited: The Hispanic woman's perspective. Journal of Adult Education, 23(1), 8-19.

Burke, R. J. & McKeen, C. A. (1997). Benefits of mentoring relationships among managerial and professional women: A cautionary tale. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 51, 43-57.

Bush, T., & Coleman, M. (1995). Professional development for heads: The role of mentoring. Journal of Educational Administration, 33(5), 60-73.

Campbell, J. C. (1995). Workplace mentoring as a human performance technology intervention and its role in changing organizational culture (Doctoral dissertation, Wayne State University, 1995). Dissertation Abstracts International, 57, 178A.

Chao, G. T. (1997). Mentoring phases and outcomes. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 51, 15-28.

Chao, G. T., Walz, P. M., & Gardner, P. D. (1991). Formal and Informal Mentorships: A comparison on mentoring functions and contrast with nonmentored counterparts. Personnel Psychology, 45, 619-636.

Corzine, J. B., Buntzman, G. F., & Busch, E. T. (1994). Mentoring, downsizing, gender and career outcomes. Journal of Social Behavior and Personality, 9(3), 517-528.

Dembele, M. (1996). Mentors and mentoring: Frames for action, ways of acting, and consequences for novice teachers' learning (Doctoral dissertation, Michigan State University, 1996). Dissertation Abstracts International, 57, 644A.

Dreher, G. F. & Ash, R. A. (1990). A comparative study of mentoring among men and women in managerial, professional, and technological positions. Journal of Applied Psychology, 75, 539-546.

Dreher, G. F., & Cox, T. H. Jr. (1996). Race, gender, and opportunity: A study of compensation attainment and the establishment of mentoring relationship. Journal of Applied Psychology, 81(3), 297-308.

Fagenson, E. A. (1994). Mentoring: who needs it? A comparison of protégés' and nonprotégés' needs for power, achievement, affiliation, and autonomy. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 45(1), 123-124.

Foote, E. (1996). Faculty development in community colleges. Community College Journal of Research and Practice, 20(1), 89-93.

Freiberg, M. R. (1994). The anatomy of a mentoring program for beginning urban teachers (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED376168)

Freitag, G. K. (1995). Effects of a mentoring relationship on the anticipatory socialization of beginning Wisconsin school administrators (Doctoral dissertation, Marquette University, 1995). Dissertation Abstracts International, 56, 3388A.

Ganser, T. (1994). How mentors rank mentor roles, benefits of mentoring and obstacles to mentoring (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED367631)

Graham, B. (1994). Mentoring and professional development in careers services in higher education. British Journal of Guidance and Counseling, 22(2), 261-271.

Hale, M. M. (1996). Learning organizations and mentoring. Public Productivity & Management Review, 19, 422-433.

Heimann, B. & Pittenger, K. K. S. (1996). The impact of formal mentorship on socialization and commitment of newcomers. Journal of Managerial Issues, 8, 108-117.

Henderson, J., & Welch, O. M. (1993). Mentoring in higher education and industry: Is there a paradox? (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED363179)

Johnson, N. B., & Scandura, T. A. (1994). The effect of mentorship and sex-role style on male-female earnings. Industrial Relations, 33, 263-274.

Majette-Daniels, B. (1993). Mentoring effectiveness in the Association of California Community College Administrators (ACCCA) mentoring program (Doctoral dissertation, University of San Francisco, 1993). Dissertation Abstracts International, 54, 2437A.

Matsumoto, J. (1997). Mentors as role models. Restaurants and Institutions, 107, 146+.

Mobley, G. M., Jaret, C., & Marsh, K. (1994). Mentoring, job satisfaction, gender, and the legal profession. Sex Roles, 31, 79-98.

Mullen, E. J. (1994). Framing the mentoring relationship as an information exchange. Human Resource Management Review, 4, 257-281.

Noe, R. A. (1988). An investigation of the determinants of successful assigned mentoring relationships. Personnel Psychology, 41, 457-479.

Orpen, C. (1995). The effects of mentoring on employees' career success. The Journal of Social Psychology, 135, 667-668.

Ragins, B. R., & Scandura, T. A. (1994). Gender differences in expected outcomes of mentoring relationships. Academy of Management Journal, 37, 957-971.

Rehrig, S. R. (1996). Elements of mentoring the novice principal (Doctoral dissertation, Iowa State University, 1996). Dissertation Abstracts International, 57, 2307A.

Scandura, T. A. (1997). Mentoring and organizational justice: An empirical investigation. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 51, 58-69.

Scandura, T. A. & Schriesheim, C. A. (1994). Leader-member exchange and supervisor career mentoring as complementary constructs in leadership research. Academy of Management Journal, 37, 1588-1602.

Shumate, S. E. (1995). An exploratory study of the mentoring process for African-American female middle management administrators in higher education (Doctoral dissertation, Kent State University, 1995). Dissertation Abstracts International, 56, 2517A.

Southworth, G. (1995). Reflections on mentoring for new school leaders. Journal of Educational Administration, 33(5), 17-28.

St. Clair, K. L. (1994). Faculty-to-faculty mentoring in the community college: An instructional component of faculty development. Community College Review, 22(3), 23-35.

Struthers, N. J. (1995). Differences in mentoring: A function of gender or organizational rank?. Journal of Social Behavior and Personality, 10(6), 265-272.

Tepper, B. J. (1995). Upward maintenance tactics in supervisory mentoring and nonmentoring relationships. Academy of Management Journal, 38, 1191-1205.

Thibodeaux, H. F. III, & Lowe, R. H. (1996). Convergence of leader-member exchange and mentoring: An investigation of social influence patterns. Journal of Social Behavior and Personality, 11(1), 97-114.

Turban, D. B., & Dougherty, T. W. (1994). Role of protégé personality in receipt of mentoring and career success. Academy of Management Journal, 37, 688-702.

Van Ast, J. (1995). Breaking the mold: An induction mentoring program for new community college vocational technical faculty. ATEA-Journal, 22(4), 11-14.

Vincent, A., & Seymour, J. (1995). Profile of women mentors: A national survey. Advanced Management Journal, 60, 4-10.

Westhoff, M. (1995). Mentoring, concerns, and job attitudes of first-year teachers (Doctoral dissertation, Northern Arizona University, 1995). Dissertation Abstracts International, 56, 1620A.

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlation Coefficients for Mentors and Mentees[1]

Variables	N	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Activities	54	3.11	.68							
	(50)	(2.88)	(.96)							
2. Age	54	49.8	8.87	.02						
	(52)	(36.52)	(5.27)	(.04)						
3. Benefits	55	2.27	.58	.58**	- .03					
	(52)	(2.28)	(.63)	(.61**)	(.17)					
4. Gender	54			.28*	.16	.19				
composition	(47)			(.35*)	(.11)	(.15)				
5. Gender	54			.29*	- .07	.48**	.25			
	(50)			(.25)	(.09)	(.03)	(.78**)			
6. Hours	54	6.13	11.04	.23	.02	.04	.22	.16		
	(45)	(3.95)	(5.38)	(.50**)	(.05)	(.43**)	(.09)	(.03)		
7. Mentor	54			- .21	.12	- .25	- .04	- .11	.08	
past										
8. Mentoring	55	3.27	.57	.80**	- .01	.68**	.18	.42**	.23	- .22
functions	(52)	(3.02)	(.82)	(.86**)	(.05)	(.64**)	(.28*)	(.15)	(.48**)	

*p < .05. **p < .01.

[1]Parentheses denote results for mentee sample.

Table 2

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Mentors and Mentees[1]

Variable	Beta	R^2	Chg. R^2	Adj. R^2	Chg. F
Step 1					
Age	2.3E-03				
	(2.2E-03)				
Gender	.499**				
	(- .254)				
Hours	- 8.6E-04				
	(3.8E-02*)				
Mentor before?	- .262				
Gender	1.9E-02	.25	.25	.16	2.98*
composition	(.254)	(.18)	(.18)	(.09)	(1.93)
Step 2					
Age	- 7.1E-04				
	(1.0E-02)				
Gender	.304*				
	(- .233)				
Hours	- 6.2E-03				
	(- 3.0E-03)				
Mentor before?	-.114				
Gender	4.1E-03				
composition	(9.1E-02)				
Mentoring	.403*				
functions	(.228)				
Activities	.182	.46	.21	.37	5.34***
	(.299)	(.49)	(.31)	(.40)	(5.34***)

Note. Dependent Variable: Benefits.
*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.
[1]Parentheses denote results for mentee sample.

A Corporate-University Partnership For The Development Of HRD Professionals: A Case Study

Marijke Kehrhahn
University of Connecticut

Rudolfo Verrilli
The Hartford Life Company

This case study reports the implementation and outcomes-to-date of a corporate-university strategic partnership for the development of HRD professionals and HRD scholars. The partnership was designed using Jacobs' guidelines for HRD collaborations and analyzed using current partnership-building theory.

Keywords: Corporate-University Partnership, Partnership Building

For years, scholars and business professionals alike have written about the need for universities to reach out to business and industry (e.g., Lynton & Elman, 1987; Sheckley, Lamdin, and Keeton, 1993). Traditionally, work on this topic has emphasized the benefits to organizations if they partner with higher education: access to professional knowledge and access to expanded learning resources. Jacobs (1996, 1997) extended the discussion of university-business partnerships in HRD by highlighting the importance of negotiating and producing mutual benefits. Brown's (1983) organizational interface theory and Suchman, Botelho, and Hinton-Walker's (1998) propositions for partnership building provide rich frameworks for examining the features of effective corporate-university partnerships.

Problem Statement and Theoretical Framework

Jacobs (1997) posed several challenges to the current practice of forming HRD collaborations between universities and organizations. While service agreements between universities and organizations for such items as the delivery of training or program evaluation are common, Jacobs ultimately asks the question: How much have these collaborations affected organizational practice and advanced the field of HRD? Jacobs proposed that corporate-university collaborations should be expanded to professional partnerships focused on producing mutual benefits rather than service agreements for specific activities. In our case, the University of Connecticut Adult and Vocational Education program was in need of connections with organizations in which graduate students could experience, observe, and research HRD practices. The Hartford Life Company was in need of specialists who could help with a transformation of the Education and Development division from a training-based enterprise to a performance-based one by providing consultation and up-to-date information.

Brown (1983) described inter-organizational partnership as organization interface, the "linkages between two organizations that evolve over time" to provide mutual benefits in addressing common or compatible interests. Brown depicted organization interface as the processes and interchanges between individuals and selected groups who serve as representatives of their organizations and build the relationship between the two organizations. Organizations as parties to the partnership have interests that may be diverse, complementary, or similar. Organizational representatives provide exchanges and linkages, process information, monitor events, and work to influence representatives of the other partnering organization to best achieve organizational outcomes.

Suchman, Botelho, and Hinton-Walker (1998) extensively defined what Brown (1983) termed the "events at interface" that are required for building effective partnerships among healthcare organizations and stakeholder groups (See Figure 1). The authors proposed that building and maintaining relationships, working toward mutual benefits, conflict management, and successful representation and negotiation of systems-level needs and requirements, are the hallmarks of effective partnership building.

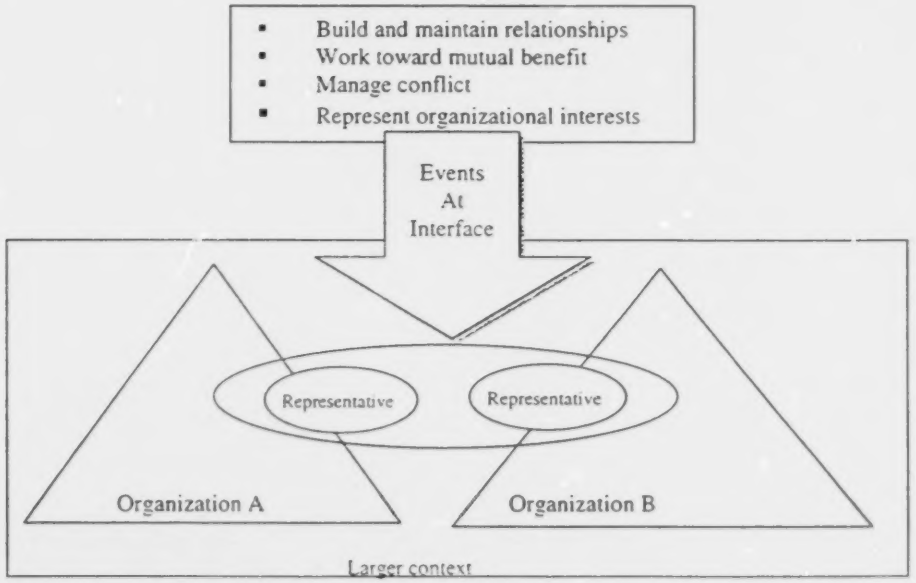
According to Suchman (1998), building and maintaining partnership relationships requires understanding the perspectives of others as well as exploring, respecting, and valuing differences. The process demands sensitivity to communication processes used by the partnering organizations and the representatives as well as the ability to engage in ongoing reflection about the current state and the desired state of the partnership. In addition,

Copyright © 1999 Kehrhahn and Verrilli

Brown (1983) highlighted the value of establishing roles, monitoring progress, assessing strengths and weaknesses, and solving problems as they arise.

Botelho (1998) proposed that working for benefit to both partnering organizations requires identifying common goals and interests through dialogue and looking beyond individual needs to the needs of systems as wholes. Organizational representatives of the partnership must work to assess obstacles to producing benefits and opportunities for capitalizing on the partnership. Partner differences in emphasis, expertise, perspectives, and cultures can become obstacles to effective partnership and result in conflict if they are not explored and addressed.

Figure 1. Partnering events at organization interface



Note: Adapted from Brown, L. D. (1983). Managing conflict at organizational interfaces. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

Productive conflict management is characterized by Brown (1983) as problem solving where common interests are paramount, common concerns are mutually perceived, information is exchanged relatively openly, and alternatives that are beneficial to both parties are explored and selected. Finally, successful representation and negotiation of organizational needs by the representatives requires effective strategies for representing and understanding needs and using win-win approaches that foster collaboration (Suchman, Botelho, & Hinton-Walker, 1998). Partnerships between organizations experiencing constant and rapid change require constant re-evaluation of needs and re-negotiation of partnership activities.

Brown (1983) proposed that partnerships can benefit and grow from careful analysis of the events at organization interface. While corporate-university partnerships abound, systematic examination of the partnerships are few. Therefore, the main study question is: What characterizes the activities and events associated with the development of a successful corporate-university partnership? Specifically, how are mutual benefits established and achieved? What obstacles to partnering emerge and how are conflicts managed? How are partner needs re-evaluated and activities re-negotiated?

Research methodology

Marsick and Watkins (1997) instructed case study researchers to identify a focus and assumptions for their research by using the literature, to decide on the unit of analysis, to select data collection methods that fit the case, to analyze the data for emerging themes and patterns, and to interpret the findings in light of what is known about

the established focus. In this case study, the unit of analysis is the activities of the organizational representatives responsible for forming and sustaining the corporate-university partnership.

Data were collected to describe and interpret the events that occurred in the partnership building process among the organizational representatives. Data were gathered through observation, dialogue, reflective observation, and group meetings, and were culled from field notes, focus group notes, meeting notes, and documents such as

memoranda and reports. Data were collected and analyzed for a 12-month period. The authors of this report were the primary researchers and the primary organizational representatives in the partnership. The primary researchers discussed, framed, and interpreted events, activities, and results. Interpretations were checked by members of the partnering parties – university interns and corporate education specialists – to confirm and expand the meaning of events. Experts in the HRD field J as peer debriefers and offered alternative interpretations and raised important questions for reflection.

The trustworthiness of the case study was enhanced by triangulation, member checking, peer debriefing, and prolonged engagement. Nevertheless, the case study results are limited to the specific corporate-university partnership that is reported on and limited to the specific point in time in which the data was collected. The results and conclusions will help other corporate-university partnerships to engage in reflective observation and reflective dialogue about their own efforts.

Description of Partnering Organizations

This case study focused on the partnership between the Hartford Life Company Organization and Employee Development (OED) unit of the Individual Annuity Services Division and the University of Connecticut Adult and Vocational Education (A/VE) program of the School of Education. Hartford Life Company is a diversified organization offering life and annuity, group pension and deferred compensation, group life and disability, and structured settlement products. The company is described by Standard & Poor as having strong products, efficient structure, and a well-diversified distribution system. Sales for 1996 totaled $9.8 billion. The partnership with Hartford Life was formed specifically with the OED unit, made up of 25 education specialists and led by Rudy Verrilli, who served as the Hartford Life's lead representative to the partnership.

The University of Connecticut is the state's only public research university and one of only two Carnegie Foundation Research I universities in New England. With a current enrollment of 22,300 students UConn stands with the leading institutions of the nation in the size, scope, and contributions of its research involvement. In the last ten years, University researchers at Storrs and at the Health Center in Farmington have attracted nearly one billion dollars in support of their work. The UConn side of the partnership involved the A/VE program, a graduate program with an enrollment of 50 and focused on workplace learning and professional development research. Marijke Kehrhahn, one of two faculty in A/VE, served as UConn's representative to the partnership.

Description of Partnership Building Activities

Jacobs (1997) provided specific guidelines for forming partnerships that are more likely to result in mutually-beneficial outcomes. Jacobs' guidelines were selected to frame and organize the strategic partnership and provided an excellent structure within which we could explore the research questions. Specifically, the focus for our work was to design and implement a strategic partnership to provide a number of opportunities for the development of HRD professionals working in the corporation as well as graduate students pursuing advanced degrees. A major component of the development plan was to support HRD practitioners to gain knowledge and skills in theory and research and HRD scholars to gain knowledge and skills in corporate HRD practices. Table 1 lists examples of how Jacobs' guidelines were implemented in this partnership.

The corporate-university partnership is built on the assumption that research is an important and integral part of effective HRD in corporate settings. With that assumption in mind we clarified that practitioners and scholars would be research partners rather than handing research responsibilities over to scholars. We established a joint purpose to conduct ongoing, longitudinal transfer of training research in the organization.

In our efforts to implement Jacobs' guidelines, we found that the day-to-day work of OED offered a multitude of opportunities for research with clear potential to advance both theory and practice. Faculty and interns worked with performance support teams to design and implement organizational research projects focused on training effectiveness and performance improvement. The partnership determined the use of research up front to benefit both partners. The organization was looking to improve practice, report to senior management, and

justify resource allocations to HRD efforts. The university was looking to conduct studies for theory-building and publication. We had common interests in advancing the practice of HRD and building support for HRD within the organization.

The organizational representatives envisioned a long-term ongoing partnership that is supported and encouraged by the partnering organizations. We worked to keep the partnership responsive to the changing needs of the organization's represented by continuously generating goals, outcomes, timelines, and products that were used by both the organization and the university. We established a formal process of holding regular meetings, writing progress reports, solving problems, articulating benefits, and making adjustments

Table 1. Jacobs' guidelines for building successful HRD partnerships and implementation strategies

Jacobs' (1997) Guidelines	Examples of partnership building activities conducted by organization representatives
1. Expect research to be a part of all HRD collaborations.	• Agreed that specific research and data collection were a critical part of the partnership. • Provided scholars to assist with HRD research that the corporation wished to conduct • Agreed that research projects would be a source of dissertation research, joint publications and presentations.
2. Derive research questions from practice.	• Joined forces with OED to derive research questions from the field. • Designed and implemented organizational research projects focused on training effectiveness and performance improvement.
3. Determine the use of research up front.	• Recognized that the organization's need for data and research was different than the university's. • Established mutual appreciation for different needs and joint goals for research.
4. Make HRD collaborations a formal process.	• Continuously generated goals, outcomes, timelines, and products that can be used by both the organization and the university. • Held regular meetings, wrote progress reports, solved problems, articulated benefits, and made adjustments.
5. Seek long term collaborations.	• Committed ourselves to and regularly discussed the benefits of a long-term partnership. • Included a number of formal projects and informal sharing of ideas and resources related to the partnership to benefit both partners in the long term.

Results

The data analysis was guided by the question, what characterizes the activities and events associated with the development of a successful corporate-university partnership? A broad analysis emphasized that the activities were characterized by a) cooperation and collaboration for producing mutual benefit, b) the identification and surmounting of obstacles and conflict resolution, and c) continuous partnership development. The three components of partnership building that emerged in this case study clarify the value of the various recommendations made by theorists in the field and highlight focused efforts that support corporate-university partnership development.

Cooperation and collaboration for producing mutual benefit.

The corporate-university partnership consistently focused on producing benefits that were mutual and complementary. Much as Brown (1983) proposed, ongoing dialogue between the organization representatives focused on the mechanics and effectiveness of the partnership in producing the desired outcomes for both parties. In the partnership studied, practitioners and scholars worked arm-in-arm to address real organizational problems in a scholarly way, and at the same time provided complementary benefits. The collaborative activities were consciously and carefully designed to produce and confirm mutual benefits. For example, in one such collaboration, HRD practitioners set out to evaluate the performance outcomes of a specific training module. With

the help of doctoral students, practitioners designed the evaluation as ongoing research and included measured of employee and work site variables that are likely to influence task performance. Through this collaboration, scholars developed a better understanding of practicality issues associated with field research while practitioners built skills for improving the rigor of their evaluations. The collaborative activity was characterized by open communication, continuous give and take, and regular evaluation of progress. Additional results of the partnership that amounted to complementary benefits to the partnering organizations are listed in Table 2.

While Table 2 delineates complementary benefits, the partnership provided mutually beneficial outcomes as well. Partners developed a number of products: conference presentations, publications, handbooks for evaluating training effectiveness and designing workplace learning, and a course that provides a template for a new course at the university. In addition, partners formulated a common vision for HRD practice and designed learning projects that addressed the needs of both partner groups.

Table 2. Summary of partnership benefits

Benefits to Hartford Life Company	Benefits to University of Connecticut
• HRD focus on employee performance was enhanced by HRD scholars' knowledge of research, theory, and techniques of how employee improvement can be designed, delivered and evaluated. • Practitioners are able to respond more readily to organizational research needs and to conduct more varied and pertinent research. They are better able to provide solid data to management to show that HRD practices are resulting in improved performance and productivity • Practitioners participated in skills and knowledge assessments that enhanced professional development plans. • HRD managers influenced content and methods in the university classroom and became active partners in the university's education programs by providing internships and research opportunities that impact business goals. • Access to latest research and trends that may impact the future of the HRD • On-site, customized workshops and work sessions designed to provide content and dialogue to generate working solutions to real business problems. • Avenue for demonstrating the company's commitment to ongoing professional development for its HRD specialists. 6. The university offers graduate and undergraduate credit to further promote professional development. 7. Residual modeling benefits with the design, development, delivery and evaluation of programs that the university instructor uses to interrelate adult learning concepts to the business environment.	• Scholarly focus on theory-building and theory-to-practice translation was enhanced by HRD practitioners' knowledge of workplace realities and practical applications. • Scholars are more able to design and conduct field research in HRD and more knowledgeable about activities necessary to bolster the validity of field research. Specifically, the partnership provided opportunities for more in-depth research on transfer of training in corporate settings • Scholars participated in skills and knowledge assessments that enhanced academic development plans. • Faculty and interns became active partners in the corporation's employee development programs and learned skills and attitudes necessary to design and conduct corporate projects. • Access to latest HRD practices and tools in use in state-of-the-art corporate settings. • Opportunities to meet and recruit new students for the Adult and Vocational Education program. • Opportunities for graduate students to design and deliver customized workshops and work sessions as well as refine and practice consulting skills.

Obstacles to Partnering and Conflict Management

Brown (1983) predicted that obstacles to effective partnerships would emerge and that the productive resolution of conflict that arises strengthens the partnership. Botelho's (1998) frames for differences as obstacles were relevant in this case study. The partnership experienced differences in emphasis (i.e., production, profit, and results v. learning, dialogue, and practice), expertise (i.e. experts collaborating with novices and the challenges of translating and communicating across those boundaries), perspectives (i.e. value of experiential learning v. traditional education formats), and cultures (i.e., culture of business v. culture of academia) had the potential to become obstacles to effective partnering. For example, restrictions, approval processes, and administrative requirements from both the university and corporate structures slowed up many partnership activities. Organization representatives of the partnership struggled to explain the procedures and requirements of their organizational systems to each other, to develop mutual strategies for working through red tape and approval channels, and to continue the work of the partnership in the temporary absence of formally approved activities. As one organization representative explained:

> The corporate structure requires a number of sign offs to engage in such an lliance.TheHRD professionals need to champion this cause and seek out a senior manager sponsor to assist with the approval process. Once the approval is given, the HRD professional must continue by meeting the needs of the business goals by providing the instructional support to improve employee performance. The impact of supporting the business goals and employees becomes the rationale for this relationship."

Resolution of conflicts around emerging obstacles was characterized as problem solving. Organization representatives worked to understand concerns, shared information and requirements openly, and crafted solutions that would benefit both parties. Management of conflict required openness, honesty, and reflective observation. For example, a conflict arose involving the university publications office and the approval of an article to be published about the partnership. The writer inaccurately portrayed partnership activities in the article and the organization representatives from both Hartford Life and UConn would not approve the article for publication. The writer, under deadline pressure, involved university executives to apply pressure to UConn's organization representative to influence her Hartford Life counterpart to approve the article. The series of events created conflict for the faculty member who was required to represent the university's needs and at the same time, to maintain the partnership. Throughout the resolution of this conflict, the university partner had to represent the interests of the corporate partner in the face of criticism from the university publications representative and remain committed to working with him in order to get the PR that her adminstrators required. The conflict was resolved through open communication and honest feedback about conflicting requirements with all parties – organization representatives and their public relations offices, as well as administrators – and a solution was negotiated that benefited all parties - the article was published at a later date. The driving force that propelled positive conflict management was the commitment to maintaining a healthy partnership.

Continuous Partnership Development

Both Brown (1983) and Suchman, Botelho, and Hinton-Walker (1998) proposed that effective partnership development requires ongoing attention to maintaining relationships, communication, and evaluation of outcomes. The case partnership was characterized by re-evaluation of the needs of the partnering organizations and re-negotiation of activities, roles, and responsibilities based on those needs. Re-evaluation actvities were particularly necessary in response to persistent change in personnel and structure of the corporate partner. For example, senior executives at the Hartford Life Company, in order to provide continued support for the partnership, required clear evidence that the expenditures of time and money were meeting business needs. Specifically, in a production environment, senior management needed to see that partnership activities were not impinging on production and were having positive results that improved production. As the Hartford Life representative stated:

> "A commitment to the alliance is essential. A senior sponsor is one of the keys to establishing this program. However, the real key is demonstrating that there is a business need and how this program meets that need. In essence, the business leaders must "see" the results...

improved employee performance."

In response, the organization representatives devoted a significant amount of time, along with the partnering groups, to collecting and organizing data that showed positive results on production to share with senior executives. Similar evaluation of corporate and university needs led to re-negotiation of activities. For example, intern assignments changed: Confidentiality statements were drawn up and signed to ensure that interns would not divulge any information about the company's activities; one intern ultimately left the project because he was consulting with a competitor. Learning projects and teaching formats were reorganized: The team learning project format for developing skills in instructional design was too time consuming as an enormous re-training project and an unexpected reorganization emerged. The entire instructional design project was re-evaluated and reconfigured to meet the immediate needs of the OED group. These examples demonstrated the commitment to keeping up with partner needs within an environment of constant change and making sure that the partnership was meeting current pressing needs.

Discussion

While partnership building theory offers many interesting propositions for the effective development of partnerships, the results of the case study highlighted the importance of three key activities and implications for the development of corporate-university partnerships. First, the results of the case study confirm the necessity of focusing collaborative efforts on producing mutual benefits (Brown, 1983; Jacobs, 1997; Suchman, Botelho, & Hinton-Walker, 1998). Specifically, keeping a focus on producing mutual benefits gives clear purpose to the partnership and prevents partnering parties from focusing entirely on their own needs. The mutual focus helps partners develop a clearer understanding of each other's perspectives, needs, and assets, enhancing the potential for further collaboration. Those interested in building effective corporate-university partnerships should develop frameworks and activities that include dialogue and planning that will result in positive outcomes for both partnering organizations.

Second, the results of the case study emphasized the importance of identifying obstacles and resolving conflicts as an integral part of partnership building. It is easy to try to avoid conflict in efforts to maintain harmony in newly formed relationships, but, as Brown (1983) pointed out, conflict that is productively addressed can strengthen the partners' capacity for problem solving and planning. Partners should seek out and value differences, discuss and understand them, assess the differences as potential obstacles, and work openly to understand and resolve conflict.

Thirdly, the building of the corporate-university partnership in this case hinged on continual development. Given the extent and speed of change in today's corporate environments, considering a partnership built or stable doesn't make sense. Agreement that the partnership is in a constant state of development and needs continued attention supports responsiveness to real rather than conceptualized needs. In addition, the case results suggested that universities must develop flexibility and the capacity to change, while corporations might benefit from developing more comprehensive foundations for their HRD work.

Conclusion

Building effective corporate-university partnership demands as much attention to process as to logistics. Often partnerships are formed and maintained by individuals who serve as organization representatives, requiring them to attend to the intricacies and health of the partnership while they represent the interests of their organizations. Obstacles and conflicts will emerge as a function of the activities that attempt to span diverse organizational structures and cultures to create mutual benefits to both partners. The partners' capacity for continuous partnership development, identification and overcoming of obstacles, conflict resolution, and working toward mutually beneficial outcomes is critical to the ultimate success of the corporate-university partnership. The actual task of building and maintaining the partnership is not simple or easy. However, the justification for the partnership is in the growth of HRD professionals and university programs, and improved business processing and employee performance.

References

Botelho, R. J. (1998). Negotiating partnerships in healthcare: Contexts and methods. In Suchman, A. L., Botelho, R. J., & Hinton-Walker, P. (Eds.). Partnerships in healthcare: Transforming relational process. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press.

Brown, L. D. (1983). Managing conflict at organizational interfaces. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.Hinton-Walker, P., Botelho, R.J., & Suchman, A. L. (1998). Partnerships, power, and process. An introduction. In Suchman, A. L., Botelho, R. J., & Hinton-Walker, P. (Eds.). Partnerships in healthcare: Transforming relational process. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press.

Jacobs, R. L. (1996). Partnership research: Pulling rabbits from hats. Human Resource Development Quarterly, 7 (2), 117-119.

Jacobs, R. L. (1997). HRD partnerships for integrating research and practice. In R. A. Swanson & E. F. Holton (Eds.), Human resource development research handbook. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Lynton, E. A., & Elman, S. E. (1987). New priorities for the university: Meeting society's needs for applied knowledge and competent individuals. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Marsick, V. J. & Watkins, K. E. (1997). Case study research methods. In R. A. Swanson & E.F.Holton (Eds.), Human resource development research handbook. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Sheckley, B. G., Lamdin, L., & Keeton, M. T. (1993). Employability in a high performance economy. Chicago: The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning.

Suchman, A.L. (1998). Control and relation.: Two foundational values and their consequences. In Suchman, A. L., Botelho, R. J., & Hinton-Walker, P. (Eds.). Partnerships in healthcare: Transforming relational process. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press.

Employed Adults in a B.S. Ed HRD Program Option: Who Are These Students and Why Are They Here?

Hui-Chin Chu,
Ana Martinez
Barbara E. Hinton
University of Arkansas

This descriptive study was conducted to determine if demographics of students in a distance learning HRD bachelor degree-completion program are consistent with the demographics of the "new adult learner" as identified in the literature, and if factors influencing student participation in this program are consistent with findings in a previously conducted needs assessment of potential students. Data was collected through open- and close-ended questions in a survey of 71 students in the program.

Keywords: Bachelor Degree Completion Programs, Distance Learning, Working Adults

Many working adult looking for career advancement or new jobs do not have a baccalaureate degree. Not having a degree limits opportunities for working adults to continuing education and access to responsible positions or career advancement. This situation is particularly problematic in rural areas. In the state of Arkansas, this situation is very significant.

Poverty and low levels of education characterize remote parts of Arkansas. In addition, educational opportunities beyond a two-year degree are scarce. Arkansas workers are facing difficulties in accessing higher education. School opportunities are restrained to two-year community and technical colleges. Lack of flexibility in scheduling makes higher education impractical for many working adults.

The Department of Vocational and Adult Education of the College of Education and Health Professions at the University of Arkansas is responding to the need of working adults through the delivery of a baccalaureate degree with a concentration in Human Resource Development. The degree completion program, launched in the fall of 1996, requires 125 semester hours. It requires 24 hours of HRD courses, 12 hours of internship, and allows up to 33 credit hours for experiential learning through portfolio development. The option provides the upper division courses required for degree completion on a two-year rotation. Students must take 56 hours general studies, which can be completed at a community or four-year college. Instruction is delivered via compressed interactive television to nine sites on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings.

The degree completion program described above was developed and implemented based upon a statewide needs assessment conducted in 1993. Motivators identified in the needs assessment as contributing to students entering such a program included organizational tuition reimbursement, degree completion opportunities, and desire for professional growth. Barriers identified in the needs assessment included: time away from job, location of program, lack of program information and lack of manager support. However, no analysis has been made of the student population currently in the program. The research problem was to determine if the demographics of the students in the program and factors that may have influenced their choosing to enter the program are consistent with the literature and the previously conducted needs assessment.

Theoretical Framework

Adults are the fastest-growing segment of all the population groups in higher education. According to the projections predicted by U.S. Bureau of the Census in 1995, the number of nontraditional (age 25 or older) college students will arise to almost 46 percent by the year 1998. The Education Resources Institute reported that the percentage of college students age 40 or over grew from 5.5 percent of the total enrollment in 1970 to 11.2 percent in 1993. The figure makes this group to be an increasingly significant part of the college classroom (1996). Nontraditional students are causing institutions of higher education to rethink the focus of academic and student affairs programs. Institutions of higher education have developed alternative structures, policies and programs that serve to provide adult access to higher education.

Copyright © 1999 Chu, Martinez, and Hinton

The globalization of commerce and trade has had a structural impact on the U.S. economy. The challenges of a global economy require our workforce to be more educated to be able to function in a global community. Today, production, manufacturing, commercial trade, and information have become global in a telecommunications-rich environment that transcends national and geographical boundaries. As American businesses restructure to meet the demands of a global economy, American workers face a future in which they must continually upgrade their knowledge and skill, or learn new skill in order to remain competitive and to increase their earning power. As increasing number of working adult students seek access to higher education, they will demand more time- and place-independent learning options and technology-based institutional learner support services (Dubois, 1996).

Husson (1996) defined the "new adult learners" as being approximately 35 years old, working full or part time with their employers providing tuition assistance and as students who are focused, goal-oriented, and motivated. They have severe time constraints, and will not tolerate hassles. They will immediately apply learning to their work. They are serious and hard working, and they have to balance multiple roles at the same time. Foster reported that degree completion, job advancement, improved long-term income, development of vocational skills, and interaction with others (1993) motivate adult learners. Aslanian (1989) found that adult learners tend to choose to study subjects directly related to their jobs or careers. Population, mobility, technology, occupations, housing, income, life expectancy and government affect societal changes. These accelerated changes are forcing adults to learn new skills, knowledge, attitudes and values.

Distance learners bring those characteristics to the educational process at the time of entry, such as: educational preparation, and motivational and persistence attributes, but also variables that more situational in nature (Billings, 1988; Kennedy & Powell, 1976; Sweet 1986). Situational barriers stem from a person's life situation and involve time constraints and family and employer support (Powell, Conway, & Ross, 1990; Pythian & Clements 1982; Rubenson, 1986; Woodley & McIntosh, 1980). Swift (1987) suggested that financial problems play a role in the attrition of nontraditional students. Financial aid from the institution or employers of the adult learners is positively associated with retention. Higher socioeconomic status is often a positive predictor of academic success.

According to Aslanian (1993), 82 percent of undergraduate adult students are degree seekers; most of them want to obtain degrees so as to advance in their career. Eighty-five percent of adult students are women, which reflects a different in life schedules: some women are doing later while some men did earlier (Aslanian, 1993). According to Foster (1993), 75 percent of the adult learners are age 25 to 44, 55 percent have some college credits, and 32 percent are in professional/managerial positions. According to Loser, Trabandit, Hatheway, and Donell (1996), 70.3 percent of telecourse students are female, 29.7 percent are male, 59 percent work full time and 19 percent work part-time. While asked reasons they take telecourses, they reported that conflict with on-campus class is the highest scored factor (43%) while minimized travel to campus is the second highest scored factor (35%).

According to the College Board (Aslanian, 1996), there is a national demand for accelerated degree programs and weekend colleges through the use of distance education. It was found that 45% of all undergraduate adult learners have taken most or all of their courses on weekday evenings, while 10% have enrolled in day and evening classes and 5% in weekend courses. The report also states that 20% of undergraduates have had some courses on the weekend.

Distance education responds to two national trend: adult learners are as the"new majority" in higher education which demands institutions become more responsive to learners' needs as degree seekers; and the greater availability of telecommunications technologies now makes it possible to serve students almost universally with expended educational services and distance learning opportunities. Distance education is a catalyst for change and is helping to shape the transformation of higher education from a facilities/faculties-centered to learner centered. Distance education also create an opportunity for adults to develop new skills, pursue a clear path way to a degree, and obtain educational credentials without having to forsake family and work responsibilities (Dubois, 1996).

Research Design

The primary purpose of study was to determine the demographics, educational background, and work experience of a group of nontraditional HRD students participating in a distance-learning bachelors degree-completion program. A secondary purpose was to examine the students' perspectives on factors which may influence their entering the program including the type and amount of family and employer support they are receiving in pursuing the degree, their motivation for pursuing the degree, and their perceived challenges/strategies to their completing the degree.

Participants in the study were students in the HRD distance-education degree-completion program option. The total number of the population was 71 students. Data was collected through a survey consisting of both closed-ended and open-ended questions. (Case studies are currently underway for phase two of the study.) Students were mailed the survey; within six weeks, a second survey was mailed to those not returning the original survey. A total of 63 useable

surveys were returned (89%). Student participation was voluntary, and each participant was required to sign a letter of informed consent. Data was analyzed through descriptive methods, reporting frequencies, range, and percentages of responses to each closed-ended question. Responses to open-ended questions were grouped according to topical responses. Data is reported in aggregate form, and individual students are not identified. The study was supported by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE).

Research Questions

The research questions were: Do the demographics of these students differ from those identified as the "new adult learner in the literature"? Are the factors that are perceived to be important for attendance in this program consistent with those identified in the prior needs assessment?

The following questions were included in the survey:

1. What are the ages, gender, and ethnicity of the students?
2. What is the education background of the students? How many hours of college credit did they have prior to entering the program? How many of them had an associate degree?
3. What is the work experience of the students? How many years of work experience do they have? What is the type of position do they hold in their current job? What kind of organization do they work for? How many years have they worked in their present position? What is the longest time they have been employed in any position? What is the size of the organization where they are employed?
4. What do they perceive to be the amount of family support they are receiving? What are the examples of this support?
5. What do they perceive to be the amount of employer support they are receiving? What are examples of this support?
6. What are the primary reasons why they are pursuing this degree?
7. What do they perceive to be their most difficult challenges to completing this degree? How do they plan to overcome these challenges?

Results

The following is a summary of the results of the survey:

Enrollment by Ethnicity

The majority of the students are Caucasian (89%). The seven black students (11%) are located in a region of the state referred to as the Delta region, an area of high black population. The proportion of black students in this group is higher than that of the black population of the general undergraduate enrollment at the University of Arkansas, which reported an undergraduate black enrollment of 6.09% and undergraduate Caucasian enrollment of 83.37% in Spring 1998.

Enrollment by Gender

The female (59%) and male (41%) student populations in this program are somewhat similar to the general undergraduate population for the University of Arkansas, which was 48.85% female and 51.15% male in Spring 1998. However, the College of Education and Health Professions traditionally has a larger female undergraduate enrollment than male undergraduate enrollment, as evidenced by the Fall 1996 enrollment of 25% male and 75% female.

Persons with Associate Degree

A majority (52%) of persons entered this degree completion program with an associate degree. The number of on-campus undergraduate students at the University of Arkansas with an associate degree is not available; however, it is expected that the majority of traditional students would not have the associate degree since the University of Arkansas does not grant an associate degree.

Age of the Participants

Eighty-six percent of participants ranged in age from 22 to 50, which is consistent with the survey results reported by Foster in 1993 that 75% of the adult learners are age 25 to 44. The majority (70%) of the participants in this program is between the ages of 31 to 50. There is no student younger than 22 and older than 59.

Years at Present Job

Seventy-nine percent of those participating in this program had worked at their present job between 1 to 10 years. Percentage of persons at the same job for 16-19 years totaled only 3%, while those working between 11-15 years totaled 13%.

Longest Years of Employment

The majority of students (63%) fell into the 6 to 15 years of employment range while only 18% had been employed five years of less and only 5% had been employed over 21 years.

Family Support

All students reported some degree of family support with the majority of them reporting total support from their families. Specific support mentioned included verbal encouragement (89%), financial support (27%), child-care assistance (25%), help with responsibilities at home (59%), transportation (22%), and other (16%).

Employer Support

Only 6% of the students reported little or no support from their employers for their attendance in the program. The largest percentage (41%) described their employers as being totally supportive. Specific support mentioned included verbal encouragement (67%), tuition reimbursement (67%), time off from work (68%), other (16%).

Type of Work

Of the students participating in the program, 44% described their work as being in management and 16% described their work as supervisory. Thirty-eight percent described their positions as being non-supervisory in nature.

Kind of Organization

The largest percentage of students (30%) works in an educational setting. The second largest type of organization was manufacturing (20%) followed by service (12%), transportation (11%), and health (8%). The remaining students were fairly evenly spread among health, government, utility, agricultural, aircraft, accounting, retail, and technology.

Distance of Travel to Classes

Sixty-three percent of the students travel less than 30 miles to attend classes. The host sites are located at two-year institutions, which are within 30 miles of most citizens in the state

Years of Anticipated Graduation

The two cohorts started in 1996 and 1997 respectively. Seventy-four percent of the students enrolled in these two cohorts anticipate graduating on time; i.e., within the two-period in which the classes are being offered.

Discussion and Conclusions

The demographics of this group of students do not differ greatly with the work of Husson (1996), Foster (1993), Aslanian (1989) and others who describe the "new adult learner" as one who is typically around 35 years of age, working full time, receiving tuition assistance from employers, goal oriented, and motivated. However, the demographics of the group do differ from the traditional, on-campus student at the University of Arkansas. For example, black enrollment (11%) is higher for this group than the undergraduate black student enrollment of 6.09% on campus in Spring 1998. When examining black enrollment by site, it is noteworthy that 58% of the students at a host site in southeastern Arkansas located in a predominately black community located in an area known as the Delta were black women. This suggests that program accessibility in other black communities could increase minority enrollment. This notion is supported by the responses to open-ended questions, which noted that when asked what was the primary reason for enrolling in this program, 40 persons said to earn a degree. Other responses included schedule fits requirements (5 responses), personal satisfaction (5 responses), and desire to be more competent in my job (4 responses). The features of the program that appeal most to the students were Friday and Saturday classes (19 responses); 9 weeks per semester/2-year course rotation (15 responses); and recognition of experiential learning (10 responses). Content, getting a degree, instructors, availability and access each received 7 responses and content geared to adult learners was mentioned 4 times. The convenience of living within 30 miles of program delivery sites seems to be a positive factor with many students.

This program appeals to a gender-balanced population, which is similar to the general undergraduate population at the University of Arkansas; however, it differs greatly to the College of Education and Health Professions undergraduate population, which has a 75% female-25% male ratio. It is not clear if the more gender-balanced enrollment is because of the nature of the subject matter, the delivery method, or a combination of both.

The majority (75%) of students has from one to 10 years of employment at their present job. This seems to suggest that those working in their present job for ten years or less might be more inclined to seek further education than persons employed in their present job for more than 15 years. It may be more important to persons in mid-career to earn a degree than those nearing the end of their career. The fact that a majority of the students (44% management, 16% supervisory) are in a management/supervisory role in their present position may also account for their motivation to improve their skills by returning to school. The students indicated that they would like to get information and knowledge in the Human Resources Development field and gain skills that they can use in their jobs. The nature of the content (HRD) seems to appeal to a broad constituency, with students employed at a variety of work settings. The fact that the host sites are at educational institutions and that some of those institutions allow their employees to take courses at a greatly reduced tuition rate could explain the relatively large percentage (30%) of students being employed in an educational setting.

The participants were informed about the HRD program from someone in their companies or from the University of Arkansas and other educational institutions. Newspapers and friends were other source of information about this program. The things that appeals most to the participants about the HRD program are the weekend classes, the nine-weeks per semester/two-year course rotation and the recognition of experience for credit. They also mentioned content, getting a degree, instructors, and availability as features that appeal to their entering the program.

The most difficult challenges the participants have faced in completing the degree have been the portfolio development, time management, and the internship activity. Participants believe they can overcome these challenges through hard work and better focus, managing time, patience, and persistence. Participants also mentioned instructors support, as an important source of encouragement. Seventy-four percent of the students expect on-time graduation. A few students were admitted prior to completion of the general studies requirement, which could account for the 26% who anticipate taking longer than two years to complete degree requirements. Thirty-eight percent of the participants plan to enter a graduate degree program after completing their baccalaureate degree.

For the final question about what program changes they would suggest, four participants suggested a three-hour course on portfolio development, three participants suggested less time per class, three participants suggested more weeks, and three participants suggested adding one evening class during the week. In comparing the results of this study with the prior needs assessment, it is clear that there is agreement on the factors identified as important to prospective students and those identified as important to this group of students.

New HRD Knowledge

While the authors do not intend to generalize the findings of this study to the general population because of the small number of participants, it is clear that offering a baccalaureate degree program at two-year colleges by distance learning

indeed benefits working adult students who are not geographically accessible to 4-year institutions. The results of the study, while informing the authors on issues involved in program evaluation, should also assist other educators with identifying the demographics and needs of working adults, in designing curriculum systems and practices for nontraditional students in HRD programs, and in delivering these programs through distance learning. Identification of the demographics and motivation factors of these students will help educators identify prospective under-served student populations. In addition, an understanding of the educational and work backgrounds of this group of students should help educators design curriculum appropriate for this audience. Understanding of the reasons for students pursuing the degree as well as challenges and support available from family and employers should help educators in designing delivery systems to meet the special needs of working adults.

References

Aslanian, C. (1989). What triggers adult participation in higher education? *Equity and Excellence, 24*(3), 5-8

Aslanian, C. B., (1993). Trends in adult learning. *The Admission Strategist.*

Aslanian, C.B. (1996). *Assessing demand for special program options: Marketing and delivering special program options to adult students.* Regional conference presentation. Orlando, FL.

Billings, D. M. (1988). A conceptual model of correspondence course completion. *The American Journal of Distance Education.*

Department of Vocational and Adult Education, (1997). *Evaluation of a program for a baccalaureate degree in human resource development for employed adults.* Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, Grant Project Narrative. Arkansas, AR: University of Arkansas.

Dubois, J. H., (1996). Going to Distance. *American Association for Adult and Continuing Education*

Foster, (1993). *A Step-By-Step Approach to Marketing: How to Increase Adult Student Enrollment.* University of Utah.

Husson, W. J., (1996). *Developing accelerated programs for adult learner.* New York: The College Board.

Kennedy, D. & Powell, R. (1976). Student progress and withdrawal in the Open University. *Teaching At A Distance.*

Loser, Trabandit, Hatheway, & Donell (1996, Spring). Marketing and delivering special program options to adult students (Term Surveys Distributed during the Information and Telecourse Student.). Edited by Dubois.

Powell, R., Conway, C. & Ross, L., (1990). Effects of student predisposing characteristics on student success. *Journal of Distance Education.*

Pythian, T., & Clements, M., (1982). Dropout from third level math courses. *Teaching at a Distance, 21*, 33-45

Rubenson, K., (1986). Distance education for adults: Old and new barriers for participation. In G. Van Enchevort, K. Harry, P. Morin, & H.G. Schutze (Eds.), *Distance higher education and the adult learner: innovations in distance education.* (Vol. 1, pp. 39-55). Heerlen, Netherlands: Dutch Open University.

Sweet, R. (1986). Toward assessment of cognitive and cognitive structures in learning. *Educational Researcher.*

Swift, J.S., Jr. (1987). Retention of adult college students, *NACADA Journal, 7*(2), 7-19.

The Education Resources Institute, (1996). *Life after forty.* Washington, DC: The Institute for Higher Education Policy.

U.S. Bureau of the Census, (1995). *Statistical Abstract of the United States 1995.* Washington, DC: Bureau of the Census.

Woodley, A. & McIntosh, N., (1980.) *The Door Stood Open: An Evaluation of the Open University Younger Student Pilot Scheme.* London: Falmer Press.